Cambridge City Council
Annual Greenhouse Gas Report 2024-25

Contents

1. Introduction

Local authorities in England were requested by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), which has now become Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), to measure and publish their greenhouse gas (GHG) report, detailing the total gross greenhouse gas emissions from their own estate and operations, on an annual basis. In this report, we give details of Cambridge City Council's total gross greenhouse gas emissions for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

2. Summary of Achievements

The Council's total gross greenhouse gas emissions for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 was 3,871 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e). Emissions were 8.1% lower in 2024/25 than in 2023/24 (emissions total was 4,213 tCO_2e) and 51.9% lower than the 2014/15 baseline (emissions total was 8,041 tCO_2e) and so the emissions total is lower over the period by 4,170 tCO_2e.

Table 1: Overall Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2024/25											
	GHG Emissions (tonnes CO_2e)										
Scopes	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
Scope 1	2,749	2,641	2,819	2,618	2,727	2,819	2,704	2,692	2,522	2,298	2,009
Scope 2	2,975	2,597	2,080	1,678	1,254	1,256	1,136	1,013	920	907	883
Scope 3	2,317	2,346	2,335	2,268	2,030	1,646	638	1,543	1,280	1,008	980
Total Gross Emissions	**8,041**	**7,584**	**7,234**	**6,564**	**6,011**	**5,721**	**4,478**	**5,248**	**4,722**	**4,213**	**3,872**[1]
Intensity Measurement Tonnes of CO_2e per head of population[2]	0.0626	0.0579	0.0549	0.0525	0.0478	0.0452	0.0358	0.0360	0.0323	0.0281	0.0259
Carbon Offsets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Green Tariff	3,386	2,821	2,588	2,002	1,601	1,432	1,287	1,102	1,113	1,219	1,245
Total Net Emissions	**4,655**	**4,763**	**4,646**	**4,562**	**4,410**	**4,289**	**3,191**	**4,146**	**3,609**	**2,994**	**2,627**

The Council's Carbon Management Plan 2021-2026 was adopted in March 2021 and set a target to reduce the Council's direct carbon emissions (from our corporate buildings, our fleet vehicles and business travel) to net zero by 2030.

3. Cambridge City Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Table 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2024/25 – by Scope.											
	GHG Emissions (tonnes CO_2e)										
Scopes	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
Scope 1											
Gas Consumption	1,540	1,637	1,544	1,303	1,347	1,478	1,438	1,392	1,288	1,380	1,275
Owned Transport	1,209	1,004	1,275	1,315	1,379	1,341	1,260	1,300	1,234	918	734
Process Emissions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Fugitive Emissions	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	0	0	0	0

[1] Amount is greater than reported total due to rounding issues

[2] Population of 149,352 used for 2024/25 (Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024, 30 July 2025).

Total Scope 1	**2,749**	**2,641**	**2,819**	**2,618**	**2,727**	**2,819**	**2,704**	**2,692**	**2,522**	**2,298**	**2,009**
Scope 2											
Purchased Electricity	2,975	2,597	2,080	1,678	1,254	1,256	1,136	1,013	920	907	883
Total Scope 2	**2,975**	**2,597**	**2,080**	**1,678**	**1,254**	**1,256**	**1,136**	**1,013**	**920**	**907**	**883**
Scope 3											
Business Travel	52	57	59	62	61	64	34	41	52	56	50
Outsourced Activities Gas & Electricity	1,904	2,001	2,012	1,985	1,819	1,449	495	1,399	1,120	840	808
Transmission and distribution (T&D) losses	361	288	264	221	150	132	109	103	109	111	121
Employee Commuting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waste Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Scope 3	**2,317**	**2,346**	**2,335**	**2,268**	**2,030**	**1,646**	**638**	**1,543**	**1,281**	**1,007**	**980**
Total Gross Emissions	**8,041**	**7,584**	**7,234**	**6,564**	**6,011**	**5,721**	**4,478**	**5,248**	**4,723**	**4,212**[3]	**3,872**[4]

4. General Organisation Information

Cambridge City Council is a district authority and is responsible for providing a wide range of services to people who live within the City of Cambridge, to people who visit the City, and to businesses and other organisations based in Cambridge including housing, refuse and recycling collections, licensing, planning and building control, Council Tax collection, and environmental health services. It currently serves a population of 149,352[5]; has 42 elected Members; and employed 859 members of staff as of 31 March 2024 (full-time equivalent of 748.02). Further information on the Council can be found on the Council's website and within its constitution, which sets out the responsibilities of the Council, its Members and its employees.

5. Reporting Period

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

6. Significant Changes in Emissions

As detailed in Table 1, the Council's gross emissions for 2024/25 was 3,871 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e) which is a reduction in emissions of 4,170 tCO_2e from the 2014/15 baseline when the emissions total was 8,041 tCO_2e. Our emissions are therefore 51.9% lower since the baseline year of 2014/15.

The average of the last 3 years' emissions totals (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25) is 4,269 tCO_2e:

[3] Amount is lower than reported total due to rounding issues
[4] Amount is greater than reported total due to rounding issues
[5] Mid-Year 2024 Population estimates for England and Wales: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2024

Table 3: 3 Year Average Emissions

Year	tCO_2e
2022/23	4,722
2023/24	4,213
2024/25	3,871
3 Year Average	4,269

Last year's 3-year average figure was 4,728 tCO_2e, which has reduced in 2024/25 to 4,269 tCO_2e. This comparison of the average figure will reduce the impact of fluctuations in energy consumption due to factors such as a warm winter requiring less energy for heating and allow us to assess if the Council's emissions are reducing overall, over a longer time period.

This three-year average figure will be used to compare with next year's 3-year average figure which will be calculated when next year's 2025/26 emissions total is compiled.

During 2024/25 the Council completed the following carbon reduction projects, which will have contributed, in part, to the reduction in this year's emissions total, despite an increase in the carbon factor used to calculate the carbon emissions from electricity use during the year, including:

- Electric waste vehicles: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS), a partnership between South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils, is progressively replacing Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV) with electric vehicles (eRCV) or low carbon alternatives at the point when they are due for replacement. A 4th eRCV, a Dennis eCollect, went into service in June 2024 and principally serves commercial waste customers in Cambridge, which will have further reduced the service's diesel use and therefore carbon emissions during 2024/25.
- Waste Vehicle HVO: The Service has also increased the usage of HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil – results in at least a 90% reduction in carbon emissions when compared to running the same vehicles on mineral diesel fuel), with effect from the end of June 2024 - the biofuel now serving almost 50% of the domestic waste fleet. During 2024/25 the service replaced 11 diesel RCVs that were at the end of their life - all 11 run on HVO (5 of these operate in the city).
- The service now has 58 RCVs, 4 are electric (maximum eRCVs able to be charged at the site at this time due to electricity grid constraints), 30 are run on HVO and 24 on diesel. Total fleet transitioned away from diesel is 59%.

7. Approach

We have followed the guidance provided in Environmental Reporting Guidelines published by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) on how to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions and also the guidance in the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool developed for councils by Local Partnerships, working with the LGA.

8. Organisational Boundary

We have defined our organisational boundary following the Financial Control approach. Further detail on which operations or activities have been included within our organisational boundary for the purposes of compiling this greenhouse gas report is provided under 'Operational Scope' below.

9. Operational Scopes

We have measured our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions for all properties and vehicles that we fully own and control. Our reported Scope 1 and 2 emissions also include emissions from properties that we lease in from others, where the Council is delivering a service.

We have reported some of our Scope 3 emissions, depending on the availability of comprehensive and reliable data; and the extent to which Cambridge City Council has control over the operation/ activity in question. See the table below for details:

Table 4: Rationale for Inclusion and Exclusion of Emissions.

Source of Emissions	Emissions included in our reporting?	Explanation for specific emissions included or excluded from our reporting
Scope 1 (Direct)		
Gas consumption: in buildings we fully own, occupy and control	Yes	This includes our office buildings, community centres, sheltered and temporary housing and crematorium (our leisure centres, are included as Scope 3 emissions because they are Outsourced Activities).
Gas consumption: in buildings we own and lease out to others	Partially	We have only included emissions arising from energy used in the communal areas of some of the buildings that we lease out (energy used in communal areas is provided and paid for by the Council). We do not have access to data on energy used by our tenants.
Gas consumption: in buildings we lease in from others	Yes	
Other fuel consumption (in owned transport) i.e. own fleet	Yes	Includes the Waste fleet vehicles managed by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste which operate predominantly in Cambridge.
Process emissions	No	Not relevant
Fugitive emissions (from air conditioning units)	Yes	Included for the first time in 2020/21.
Scope 2 (Energy Indirect)		

Source of Emissions	Emissions included in our reporting?	Explanation for specific emissions included or excluded from our reporting
Purchased electricity: in buildings we fully own, occupy and control	Yes	This includes our office buildings, community centres, car parks, sheltered and temporary housing and crematorium (our leisure centres are included as Scope 3 emissions because they are Outsourced Activities).
Purchased electricity: in buildings we own and lease out to others	Partially	We have only included emissions arising from energy used in the communal areas of some of the buildings that we lease out (energy used in communal areas is provided and paid for by the Council). We do not have access to data on energy used by our tenants.
Purchased electricity: in buildings we lease in from others	Yes	
Scope 3 (Other Indirect)		
Purchased materials and fuels	No	Excluded due to time/ cost of data collection.
Business travel (business mileage, car club use, rail journeys and flights)	Yes	Rail journeys and flights Included for the first time in 2022/23.
Hotel stays	Yes	Included for the first time in 2022/23.
Commuter travel	No	Excluded due to time/ cost of data collection.
Waste disposal	No	Excluded due to time/ cost of data collection.
Water usage	No	Excluded due to time/ cost of data collection.
Outsourced activities	Partially	Included: Management of leisure sites & swimming pools[1];

[1] We share management & maintenance responsibility for our leisure sites & swimming pools with the appointed contractor.

10. Conversion/ Emissions Factors Used

The emissions factors used to calculate the emissions in this Greenhouse Gas Report are those provided by Defra (Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs) titled: 'UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting' which is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2022.

11. Geographical Breakdown

All of our operations and activities are carried out in the UK.

12. Baseline Year

Our baseline year is 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015.

13. Base Year Recalculation Policy

In establishing our base year recalculation policy, we have closely followed advice given in the Government's guidance on how to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions.

Should the Council **in-source or acquire** a facility or emission source from another party, then we will recalculate our base year emissions provided that:

- The facility or emission source in question was operational during our base year (2014/15); *and*
- We had not accounted for the emissions from this facility or emission source when we first established our base year emissions; *and*
- The emissions from the in-sourced or acquired emission source equate to more than 1% of our original base year emissions.

Should the Council **outsource** a facility or emission source to another party, we will *not* recalculate our base year emissions but we will instead report the emissions arising from the outsourced facility or activity as part of our Scope 3 emissions, provided that:

- We are able to source comprehensive and accurate data on emissions arising from the facility/ activity from the party to which the facility/ activity has been outsourced; *and*
- The emissions from the outsourced facility or activity equate to more than 1% of our original base year emissions.

Should we discover errors in the energy and fuel consumption data that we used to calculate our base year emissions, we will recalculate our base year emissions using revised/ amended data in order to correct the errors.

In all other circumstances, we will not recalculate our base year emissions, unless this is specifically required or advised in relevant guidance.

14. Target

The Council's new Carbon Management Plan 2021-2026 was adopted in March 2021 and set a target to reduce the Council's direct carbon emissions (from our corporate buildings, our vehicles and business travel) to net zero by 2030.

15. Intensity Measurement

We have included an intensity ratio of 'tonnes of CO_2e per resident of Cambridge City', which for 2024/25 is based on Mid-Year 2024 Population estimates for England and Wales:

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2024.

16. External Assurance Statement

In August 2015 the Building Energy Manager from the University of Cambridge assessed the approach and methodology we have followed when compiling this Greenhouse Gas Report and confirmed that our approach is robust and fit for purpose.

The Greater Cambridge Shared Internal Audit team have audited the process every year since, to ensure that the data used to compile this report is accurate in the form of an assessment of the data collection process and the carbon emissions calculations.

17. Carbon Offsets

We have not purchased any carbon credits.

18. Amount of Electricity Purchased for use or consumption in owned or controlled sources

6,604 MWh

19. Purchased Green Tariffs – Reduction in tonnes of CO_2e per year

From October 2016, the council signed up to Total Gas and Power's Pure Green energy tariff. The energy under the Pure Green Energy tariff comes from 100% renewable sources, which includes solar, wind and hydro/wave energy. This tariff is applied to all the council's electricity meters (except outsourced sites – other than Parkside Pool - which is included because its meters are on the council's energy contract).

The amount of CO_2 saved in 2024/25 as a result of the council's green tariff is 1,245 tonnes CO_2.

The GHG report only collates gross emissions (totals for Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3) and so although we can report the amount of electricity we have used on a green tariff, the net emissions are not used for the total.

20. Amount of Electricity Generated from Owned or Controlled Sources

In 2024/25 the Council owned or part-owned 12 solar photovoltaic (PV) systems which are 'on-site' at council owned buildings where it provides services and so are included in the Greenhouse Gas Report:

Table 5: Electricity Generated from Council Owned Solar PV

Site	Generated in 2024/25 (kWh)	Exported 50% deemed (kWh)
1. Brandon Court	21,663	10,832
2. New Street Hostel	5,965	2,982
3. Cherry Hinton Village Centre	9,042	4,521
4. Parkside Pool	42,126	21,063
5. Kings Hedges	8,415	4,208
6. Abbey Pool	23,020	11,510
7. Clay Farm	20,313	10,157
8. Crematorium	7,111	3,556
9. Whitefriars	16,888	8,444
10. Mandela House	25,182	12,591
11. The Guildhall	22,211	11,106
12. Waterbeach (50% owned by South Cambridgeshire District Council so figures are 50% of the total)	12,474	6,237
TOTAL:	**214,411**	**107,205**

Since none of the systems have export meters installed, it is not possible for us to include the amount of own generated renewable electricity exported to the grid in this GHG Report.

21. Amount of Heat Generated from Owned or Controlled Sources

During 2024/25 two solar thermal systems installed at Abbey Pool generated 0 kWhth (kilowatt hours of heat) as they are not operational.

For further information about this report, please contact the Climate Change Officer on (01223) 457176 or email: sustainablecity@cambridge.gov.uk.